

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OC-06 CCO-00 SY-05 MCT-01 PPT-01

CA-01 HA-05 SCS-06 A-01 OPR-02 PC-01 PER-01

AID-05 OMB-01 IO-13 USSS-00 EB-08 SNM-05 DEAE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 /154 W

-----124348 061519Z /46

R 061000Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5021

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0781

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BM

SUBJ: POWER LINES SABOTAGED; NEW TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

1. THE ELECTRICAL POWER SERVICE TO RANGOON WAS INTERRUPTED ON MARCH 4 WHEN INSURGENT/TERRORISTS BLEW UP AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF PYLONS IN THE KAYAH STATE CARRYING TRANSMISSION WIRES FROM THE LAWPITA HYDROELECTRIC FACILITY (RANGOON'S MAIN SOURCE OF POWER) TO THE CAPITAL. BURMESE SECURITY OFFICIALS BELIEVE THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SABOTAGE ARE MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S PATRIOTIC PARTY, A THAILAND-BASED GROUP CONSISTING MAINLY OF FOLLOWERS OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER U NU WHO HAVE COMMITTED A NUMBER OF TERRORIST ACTS IN BURMA OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, INCLUDING SIMILAR ATTACKS ON THESE POWER LINES. (AT LEAST TWO OTHER EXPLOSIVE DEVICES ATTRIBUTED TO THE PPP WERE DISCOVERED IN LOWER BURMA THE PAST TWO WEEKS AND SEVERAL ARRESTS WERE MADE.) MANY PARTS OF RANGOON HAVE BEEN WITHOUT ELECTRICITY SINCE THE INCIDENT, AS BACK-UP GENERATORS HAVE PROVED INADEQUATE TO SUPPLY THE CITY.

2. IN AN APPARENTLY UNRELATED MOVE, THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN
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INFORMED THE GUB IS ABOUT TO ANNOUNCE THAT FOREIGN DIPLOMATS, UN PERSONNEL AND TOURISTS WILL HENCEFORTH NOT BE ALLOWED TO TRAVEL TO THE SHAN AND KAYAH STATES, OR TO TRAVEL OVERLAND TO POINTS NORTH. AIR TRAVEL TO MANDALAY AND PAGAN WILL BE PERMITTED. THE BASIS OF THESE RESTRICTIONS IS THAT MILITARY INTELLIGENCE HAS LEARNED OF PLANS BY THE SHAN UNITED ARMY, A MAJOR NARCOICS TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION, TO KIDNAP FOREIGNERS

AND HIGH BURMESE OFFICIALS FOR RANSOM. WE WILL REPORT THESE
NEW RESTRICTIONS IN MORE DETAIL WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED
OFFICIALLY.

3. COMMENT: THE RASH OF BOMBING INCIDENTS IS PROBABLY RELATED
TO THE CONVENING OF THE PYITHU HLUTTAW (BURMA'S PARLIAMENT)
ON MARCH 2. TRADITIONALLY THIS HAS BEEN A TIME FOR DISSIDENTS
TO CAUSE SUCH INCIDENTS AS A WAY OF CALLING ATTENTION TO THE
EXISTENCE OF OPPOSITION TO THE NE WIN REGIME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SABOTAGE, ELECTRIC POWER, TRAVEL CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978RANGOO00781
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780100-0852
Format: TEL
From: RANGOON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803102/aaaadisc.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1428f8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3106003
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POWER LINES SABOTAGED; NEW TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS
TAGS: PINT, BM
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1428f8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014